

## Base Ops NCO keeps Camp Steel Falcon moving

**Story and Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Bell, 372nd MPAD**

CAMP STEEL FALCON, Iraq - Some say you'll have a better chance of spotting Elvis in Baghdad than seeing Sgt. Maj. Jeff Wells sitting in his office.

Although he has his own non-tactical vehicle for getting around one of the largest forward operating bases in Baghdad, the 44-year-old noncommissioned officer in charge of base operations prefers walking the walled compound located on Highway 8 in southern Baghdad.

Armed with his most deadly weapon, his two-way radio, Wells is able to track contractors and Soldiers working on more than 50 different projects at any given time.

"My number one focus is the quality of life for the tenants here," he said. "Secondly, we are trying to clean up the life supports elements of the FOB."

Ever since Camp Steel Falcon, home of the 1st Armored Division Artillery Combat Team, has been designated as an enduring FOB, Wells' primary mission focus has been ensuring the camp's infrastructure is built to last.

"We're trying to be an enduring FOB," he said after one long day overseeing a large project to replace the dirt roads with paved roads. "What I do is find myself working with a lot of different contractors. Sometimes it can be overwhelming, but it's work that needs to be done, and that work needs to be tracked."

One of Wells' biggest concerns is water. With more than 3,000 Soldiers and contractors calling Camp Steel Falcon home, Wells said, making sure everyone has potable and non-potable water is very important.

From the dining facility to soldiers brushing their teeth, Camp Steel Falcon uses more than 400,000 gallons of water daily. He said there is more to it than just turning on the faucet or shower.

"The reason we have a good supply of water is because of the enormous amount of coordination between KBR (Kellogg, Brown and Root contractors) and the Iraqis to ensure we don't run out of water," he said.

"I have my hands in so many projects it's not even funny," he said.

More than 70 Iraqi workers are employed by the Army to put nails in walls, unplug toilets or sweep dirt off the roads, Wells said. Hiring Al Rashid district residents is a very important step to getting Iraq to an independent, democratic country.

"We want them to be able to take over their own country some day," he said. "By giving them jobs here on the FOB, maybe they'll pick up a new skill they will be able to use now or when we are long gone."



**Sgt. Maj. Jeff Wells, 44, from Hopewell, Va., base operations non-commissioned-officer-in-charge of Camp Steel Falcon in southern Baghdad, uses the radio to keep up on the latest projects one of the largest forward operating base in Baghdad.**

His day-to-day work involves making many deals, Wells said. One deal, stands out among the others.

"I remember one 16-year-old Iraqi girl who really wanted a job working at the Post Exchange," he said. "I wondered why she wasn't in school and why a job was more important than an education. I figured finishing high school would be important to someone here."

Because of the distance and location of the nearest primary school, she was unable to attend school but still had a strong desire to learn the English language.

Once again Wells made a deal. Not for a lower price or more workers, but something more valuable - an education for a young Iraqi mind.

Looking into his pool of talented Iraqi workers, Wells found a former professor, now working as a skilled laborer, willing to tutor the young woman. She gets to practice what she has learned at the FOB exchange.

"Now, every Friday she is taking English lessons here on the FOB - it's a great thing to see her learning to speak English."

Whether it's calming tensions between Iraqi workers and tenants or making a young Iraqi's dream come true, Wells said to be able to run a small city boils down to one thing, "It's about being a Soldier - nothing more or less," he said.

## **NEWS...**

### **Blasts Kill 143 at Iraq Shiite Shrine**

KARBALA, Iraq (AP) - Simultaneous explosions ripped through crowds of worshippers Tuesday at Shiite Muslim shrines in Baghdad and Karbala, killing at least 143 people on the holiest day of the Shiite calendar, a U.S. general said. It was the bloodiest day since the end of major fighting. A "prime suspect" in the attacks was al Qaida-linked Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said. U.S. officials say al-Zarqawi was planning spectacular attacks on Shiites aimed at sparking a Sunni-Shiite civil war.

### **Kerry Won't Predict a Super Tuesday Sweep**

ATLANTA (AP) - John Kerry refrained Tuesday from predicting a sweep of 10 states that could drive rival John Edwards from the race for the Democratic nomination, but the front-runner told transportation workers in Georgia he expects to return to the state for the fall campaign against President Bush. "We're going to try to do the best we can state by state," Kerry told reporters as he campaigned in suburban Atlanta. Appearing at a freight and trucking depot just outside the city, the Massachusetts senator promoted jobs and health care and promised workers he would neither cut nor privatize Social Security.

### **Senate OKs Assault Weapons Ban Extension**

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Senate voted Tuesday to extend for another decade a ban on military-style assault weapons and to require background checks on buyers at private gun shows, giving Democrats rare victories on gun legislation that would also deny crime victims the ability to sue gunmakers and dealers. Democratic presidential contenders John Kerry of Massachusetts and John Edwards of North Carolina broke away from the Super Tuesday campaign trail to cast votes with the 52-47 majority on the assault weapons ban and the 53-46 majority on the gun show bill.

### **Rebel Says He's New Haiti Military Chief**

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - Rebel leader Guy Philippe on Tuesday declared himself the new chief of Haiti's military, which had been disbanded by ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Flanked by other rebel leaders and senior officers of Haiti's police force, Philippe told a news conference: "I am the chief." Asked what he meant, he said, "the military chief."

### ***Thought for the day...***

#### **Winners**

History has demonstrated that the most notable winners usually encountered heartbreaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to become discouraged by their defeats.

--B. C. Forbes

## **Meanwhile back in the World...**

### **Big-Drinking Finns Prepare for Price Cut**

By MATTI HUUHTANEN  
Associated Press Writer

HELSINKI, Finland (AP) -- Hundreds of trucks prepared to roll onto frozen roads at midnight Sunday, stocked with beer and hard cider for a population that eagerly awaits a historic government measure that will cut alcohol prices by nearly 40 percent.

But anticipation was mixed with fear in Finland, a country known for heavy drinking and the violence it can spawn.

Officials warned of the harmful effects of an expected surge in consumption after taxes and prices are slashed Monday in a move to prevent much cheaper Estonian drinks from flooding the country when that Baltic state joins the European Union in May.

"Finns have the traditional Friday and Saturday night of drinking to get drunk ... and when it's easier or cheaper to get alcohol, consumption grows," said Ritva Varamaki, from the Finnish Health Promotion Center.

The government says liquor plays a major role in violence in Finland. Also, the number of drunken driving cases are increasing, as are illnesses attributed to high alcohol consumption.

The government has maintained a strict alcohol policy since Finland ended prohibition in 1932 in an attempt to control consumption and to increase tax revenues.

Steep taxes have meant high prices, and only the 315 stores run by the state monopoly, Alko, are allowed to sell anything stronger than mild beers and cider.

When Finland and neighboring Sweden, also concerned about high alcohol consumption, joined the EU in 1995, they were granted special permission to continue their tight policies until January 2004, including limiting the amount of alcohol travelers could bring home from trips abroad to other EU countries.

In Sweden, the government stuck to its policy of high taxes even after the EU's special exemption ended.

In Finland, officials chose to reduce taxes now because they fear what will happen after May 1 when Estonia joins the EU and Finns are expected to swarm to their southern neighbor to buy cheap drink in bulk for personal consumption. Under EU guidelines, people can import 300 bottles of beer and 12 bottles of hard liquor from another EU country without paying any tariffs.

Situated only 50 miles away, Estonia already is a popular tourist destination for hundreds of thousands of Finns each year, who shop there for alcohol. Current Finnish duty-free import limits are 40 bottles of beer and one bottle of hard liquor from non-EU countries.

But now that Finland is cutting alcohol prices, some people may be less inclined to travel to Estonia.

In a move to compete with the Finnish price cuts and the lifting of import restrictions, shipping lines have announced that they are cutting duty free prices on ferries between Finland and Sweden and on the popular "booze cruises" in the Baltic Sea, another source of cheaper drinks for Finns.

Near Helsinki, Sinebrychoff, the country's largest brewery, was preparing to dispatch 4.2 million pints of beer - twice the usual amount - at midnight Sunday to stores, which aren't allowed to dispense alcohol at the cheaper rate until Monday.

"We've been preparing for this since Jan.1, and will have more than 500 people working, compared to the usual 150," said Pasi Lehtinen, the brewery's logistics manager. "It's going to be some night."

On Monday, beer will be about 14 percent cheaper, with a small bottle going for about \$1.24. A half-quart bottle of a popular local vodka, Koskenkorva, will be 36 percent cheaper, selling for \$11.40 instead of the current \$17.80.

## ***Today in History...***

### **March 3, 1945 Finland declares war on German**

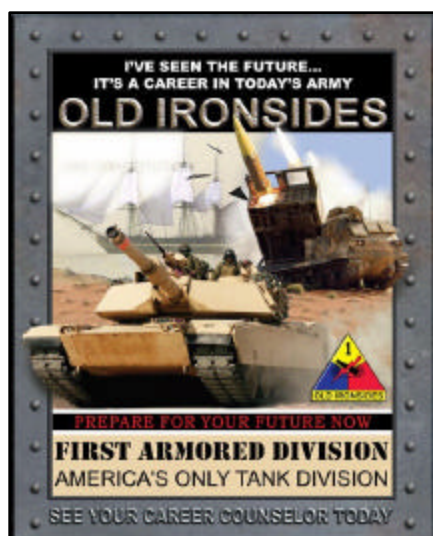
(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) On this day, Finland, under increasing pressure from both the United States and the Soviet Union, finally declares war on its former partner, Germany.

After the German invasion of Poland, the USSR, wanting to protect Leningrad more than ever from encroachment by the West--even its dubious Nonaggression Pact partner Germany--began demanding control of various disputed areas from Finland, including part of the Karelian Isthmus (the land bridge that gave access to Leningrad). Finland resisted the Soviet pressure. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin responded by enacting the "small print" of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Nonaggression Pact the USSR had signed with Germany back in August, which gave the USSR free reign in its "sphere of influence." The Soviets invaded Finland on November 30, 1939. (Stalin claimed that Finnish troops opened fire on Soviet troops.)

The Finns stunned everyone by beating back the initial Soviet offensive. Although their resistance consisted of only small numbers of trained soldiers (on skis and bicycles!) the refusal to submit made headlines around the world. President Roosevelt quickly extended \$10 million in credit to Finland, while also noting that the Finns were the only people to pay back their World War I war debt to the United States in full. But by the time the Soviets had a chance to regroup and send in massive reinforcements, the Finnish resistance was spent. In March 1940, negotiations with the Soviets began, and Finland signed the Treaty of Moscow, which handed over control of the Karelian Isthmus.

As tension increased between Germany and the USSR, Finland saw in Hitler a possible ally in gaining back its lost territory. German troops were allowed on Finnish soil as the Germans prepared for their invasion of the Soviet Union--a war that the Finns joined. Although Finnish troops captured large areas of East Karelia back from the Soviet Union, they were reluctant to trespass the old borders of 1939 and help Germany in the siege of Leningrad.

But repeated German setbacks resulted in putting the Soviet Union on the offensive again. Shortly after the Red Army broke through to the Karelian Isthmus in June 1944, the Finnish president, Risto Ryti, resigned. (Around this same time, the United States broke off relations with Finland after repeated demands that Ryti renounce his alliance with Germany were rebuffed.) Ryti's successor, Gustaf Mannerheim, immediately sued for an armistice with the Soviet Union. This was signed on September 19, 1944; Finland agreed to the terms of the 1940 Treaty of Moscow and to throw all German troops off Finnish soil. The final act of capitulation came on March 3, 1945, with a formal declaration of war against the already dying Germany.



### **Time is running out for special Reenlistment bonuses**

More than 1,650 soldiers have taken advantage of the deployed force reenlistment bonus since October. Soldiers must understand the bonus is no longer available to them once he or she redeploy to home station.

The most frequently asked question from soldiers is "how long am I eligible for the reenlistment bonus?"

The answer is simple: once a soldier leaves Iraq, Afghanistan, or Kuwait, the lump sum tax-free bonus no longer exists.

As we begin to redeploy, our Career Counselors and key retention personnel will become much less accessible as they will be spread thin throughout Iraq, Kuwait, and Germany.

Soldiers eligible for this incentive are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity well in advance of their expected redeployment date. Soldiers should contact their Career Counselors who are standing by to assist our Iron Soldiers in continuing to serve proudly and "Stay Army."

### **LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE CHALLENGES? LOOK INTO THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES.**

The SF Recruiter is in theater until March 30. The 1AD Division Reup Team will host the Special Forces Brief at the Soldier Support Center classroom (2nd floor) on March 5 at 10 a.m.

For more information about the Special Forces recruitment program or any other reenlistment opportunity, contact your career counselor.

# The Old Ironsides Report

March 3, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 03, 2004				As of: Tuesday, March 02, 2004 6:32:34 AM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		HEADLINE NEWS	MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON	TODAY		00:00
00:30	THE HOT LIST	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO			NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	00:30
01:00	AROUND THE HORN				LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN				01:30
02:00	SPORTSCENTER			SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES		NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: WAKE FOREST @ VIRGINIA	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN WILDCARD GAME: WISCONSIN @ MICHIGAN STATE	ROCKET POWER : - CHANNEL SURFING/ OUTTA MY PIT!	BLUE'S CLUES - BLUE'S NEW PLACE	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS : - THE WAY WE WAS	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	COUNTDOWN WITH KEITH OLBERMANN	04:00
04:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - THE DENTIST			04:30
05:00	ESPNEWS	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC: AUBURN @ MISSISSIPPI STATE	ALLY MCBEAL : - 'TIS THE SEASON	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
05:30	ESPNEWS					05:30
06:00	BALLROOM BOXING		STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION : - CHAIN OF COMMAND (PT. 1)	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWSHOUR	06:00
06:30				JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	TACTICAL TO PRACTICAL : - ATTACK PLANES, ANIMALS AT WAR, AND INFLATABLES	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30		ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00	NBA FASTBREAK	HEADLINE NEWS	SECRETS OF WAR : - THE ULTRA ENIGMA		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	HEADLINE NEWS				08:30
09:00	TOTALLY NASCAR	SESAME STREET	THE ROAD TO RIO	BETWEEN THE LIONS : - WHAT PARAKEETS NEED	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION			THE ADVENTURES OF JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS : - KRUNCH TIME/SUBSTITUTE CREATURE		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	BLUE'S CLUES - BLUE'S NEW PLACE		A WALK IN YOUR SHOES	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		STRANGE DAYS AT BLAKE HOLSEY HIGH (TV-7): - CULTURE		10:30
11:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC: AUBURN @ MISSISSIPPI STATE	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	ROCKET POWER : - CHANNEL SURFING/ OUTTA MY PIT!	JEOPARDY!	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	HEADLINE NEWS		11:30
11:45					HEADLINE NEWS	11:45
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00			THE SIMPSONS : - THE WAY WE WAS	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - THE DENTIST	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00	SPORTSCENTER		AMERICAN IDOL 3: UN CUT, UNCENSORED, & UNTALENTED	THE SIMPLE LIFE	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
13:30						13:30
14:00	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	HEADLINE NEWS	AMERICAN IDOL	AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL : - THE GIRL WHO OVERSLEPT	CNN DAYBREAK	14:00
14:30	NBA FASTBREAK	JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ATLANTIC 10: WAKE FOREST @ VIRGINIA	TODAY	TACTICAL TO PRACTICAL : - ATTACK PLANES, ANIMALS AT WAR, AND INFLATABLES	THE OC : - THE HOMECOMING	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00			SECRETS OF WAR : - THE ULTRA ENIGMA	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00	SPORTSCENTER	BETWEEN THE LIONS : - WHAT PARAKEETS NEED	THE ROAD TO RIO		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		THE ADVENTURES OF JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS : - KRUNCH TIME/SUBSTITUTE CREATURE		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	A WALK IN YOUR SHOES			THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30	TOTALLY NASCAR	STRANGE DAYS AT BLAKE HOLSEY HIGH (TV-7): - CULTURE		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	ROCKET POWER : - CHANNEL SURFING/ OUTTA MY PIT!	MR. NICE GUY		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS			19:30
20:00	NBA FASTBREAK	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - THE WAY WE WAS		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	HEADLINE NEWS	THE COSBY SHOW : - THE DENTIST			20:30
20:45				WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?		20:45
21:00	MLB - SPRING TRAINING: NY METS @ LOS ANGELES DODGERS	THE SIMPLE LIFE	AMERICAN IDOL 3: UN CUT, UNCENSORED, & UNTALENTED		FOX NEWS LIVE	21:00
22:00		AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL : - THE GIRL WHO OVERSLEPT	AMERICAN IDOL		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00		THE OC : - THE HOMECOMING	TACTICAL TO PRACTICAL : - ATTACK PLANES, ANIMALS AT WAR, AND INFLATABLES	ESPNEWS: THE HOT LIST	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30				HEADLINE NEWS	CNN'S INSIDE POLITICS	23:30